



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **OHIO MAN INDICTED FOR ARRANGING MARRIAGE TO EVADE IMMIGRATION LAWS**

*Illegal Jordanian paid \$2000 to woman for fraudulent marriage*

CINCINNATI – An illegal alien from Jordan was arrested today following his March 4 indictment here for conspiracy, mail fraud and marriage fraud to evade U.S. immigration laws, announced U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio Gregory G. Lockhart after an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the FBI's Cincinnati Field Division.

ICE special agents today arrested Abdel Razaq in Raleigh, N.C., alleging that he approached a U.S. citizen woman and asked her to marry him so that he could be eligible to apply for permanent residency here, and gain legal status. Razaq, 55, of Fairfield, Ohio, ultimately paid her \$2,000 to marry him.

The indictment says Razaq married the woman in Bridgeview, Ill., Dec. 9, 1996. The two never lived together, but Razaq kept women's clothing at his Fairfield apartment as part of the ruse in case immigration agents attempted to verify the validity of their marriage. He also arranged a picnic with friends and had photos taken of them together to support the appearance of marriage's legitimacy.

He submitted an application for conditional permanent residency in 1997, and in 2003 he applied to have all conditions removed. The indictment alleges that Razaq's applications contained false statements and used fraudulent documents.

Charges of conspiracy and making false statements each carry a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000. Mail fraud carries a maximum punishment of 20 years imprisonment. If convicted, Razaq faces deportation after he serves any criminal sentence that is ordered.

“We welcome people to this country who want to live, work and contribute to society,” said U.S. Attorney Gregory Lockhart, “but we cannot allow people to abuse the law and marry solely to evade legal immigration procedures.” Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by agents of ICE and the FBI.

“ICE is committed to ensuring the integrity of our immigration system,” said ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Brian M. Moskowitz. “We will continue to vigorously pursue those that attempt to exploit this country’s generosity.”

Assistant U.S. Attorney Amul Thapar is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*